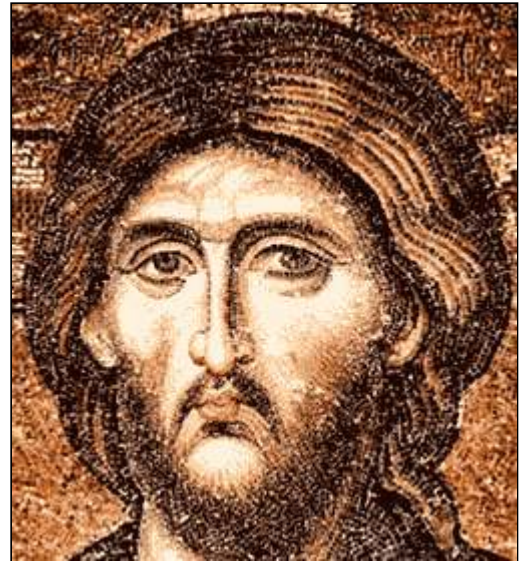


# Did Jesus Exist and Who Is the Christ?

**Recommended Books on Jesus Including Titles That Question the Existence of an Historical Jesus as Given in the Gospels and Books about the Mythical, Mystical and Cosmic Christ**



"...Jesus Christ, *i.e.*, the Man-God of the Christians copied from the Avatâras of every country, from the Hindu Krishna as well as the Egyptian Horus, was never a *historical* person. He is a deified personification of the glorified type of the great Hierophants of the Temples, and his story, as told in the New Testament, is an allegory, assuredly containing profound esoteric truths, but still an allegory. Every act of the Jesus of the New Testament, every word attributed to him, every event related of him during the three years of the mission he is said to have accomplished, rests on the programme of the Cycle of Initiation, a cycle founded on the Precession of the Equinoxes and the Signs of the Zodiac...."

"The legend of which I speak is founded....on the existence of a personage called Jehoshua (from which Jesus has been made) born at Lüd or Lydda about 120 years before the modern era....In spite of all the desperate research made during long centuries, if we set aside the testimony of the 'Evangelists,' *i.e.*, unknown men whose identity has never been established, and that of the *Fathers* of the Church, interested fanatics, neither history, nor profane tradition, neither official documents, nor the contemporaries of the *soidisant* drama, are able to provide one single serious proof of the historical and real existence, not only of the Man-God but even of him called Jesus of Nazareth, from the year 1 to the year 33. All is darkness and silence....The biography of Jesus was *invented after the first century*...." H.P. Blavatsky

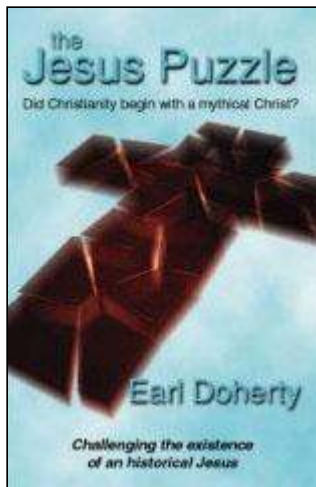
"...'The coming of Christ,' means *the presence of CHRISTOS* in a regenerated world, and not at all the actual coming in body of 'Christ' Jesus....Christ -- the true esoteric SAVIOR -- is no man, but the DIVINE PRINCIPLE in every human being. He who strives to resurrect the Spirit *crucified in him by his own terrestrial passions*, and buried deep in the 'sepulcher' of his sinful flesh; he who has the strength to roll back *the stone of matter* from the door of his own *inner sanctuary*, he *has the risen Christ in him*...."

"The 'Christ principle,' the awakened and glorified Spirit of Truth, being universal and eternal, the true *Christos* cannot be monopolized by any one person....We may learn from the Gospel *according to Luke*, that the 'worthy' were those who had been initiated into the mysteries of the Gnosis, and who were 'accounted worthy' to attain that 'resurrection from the dead' *in this life*....In other words, they were the great adepts of *whatever religion*; and the words apply to all those who, without being Initiates, strive and succeed, through personal efforts to *live the life* and to attain the naturally ensuing spiritual illumination in blending their personality -- (the 'Son') with (the 'Father,') their individual divine Spirit, *the God within* them. This 'resurrection' can never be monopolized by the Christians, but is the spiritual birth-right of every human being endowed with soul and spirit, whatever his religion may be. Such individual is a *Christ-man*. On the other hand, those who choose to ignore the Christ (principle) within themselves, must die *unregenerate heathens* -- baptism, sacraments, lip-prayers, and belief in dogmas notwithstanding.... He who finds Christos within himself and recognizes the latter as his only 'way,' becomes a follower and an *Apostle of Christ*, though he may have never been baptized, nor even have met a 'Christian,' still less call himself one." H.P. Blavatsky

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## **The Jesus Puzzle: Did Christianity Begin with a Mythical Christ?** by Earl Doherty

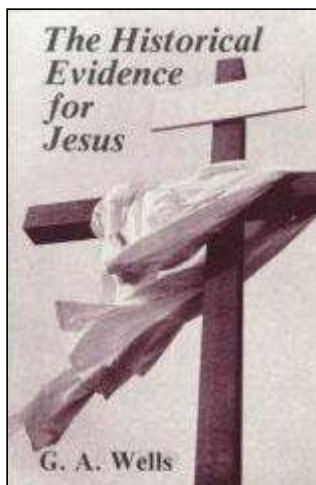
Why are the events of the Gospel story, and its central character Jesus of Nazareth, not found in the New Testament epistles? Why does Paul's divine Christ seem to have no connection to the Gospel Jesus, but closely resembles the many pagan savior gods of the time who lived only in myth? Why, given the spread of Christianity across the Roman Empire



in the first century, did only one Christian community compose a story of Jesus' life and death - the Gospel of Mark - while every other Gospel simply copied and reworked the first one? Why is every detail in the Gospel story of Jesus' trial and crucifixion drawn from passages in the Old Testament? The answer to these and other questions surrounding the New Testament will come as a shock to those who imagine that the origins of Christianity and the figure of Jesus are securely represented by Christian tradition and the Gospels. With the arrival of the third millennium, the time has come to face the stunning realization that for the last 1900 years, Christianity has revered a founder and icon of the faith who probably never existed.

This book is a new presentation of the argument that no historical Jesus existed. It is a full and comprehensive survey of the question through an examination of the early Christian record, canonical and non-canonical, from Q to the Gospels, from the earliest Pauline epistles to the second century apologists, along with Jewish, Gnostic, and Greco-Roman documents of the time. The philosophy of the era, its religious expression in the pagan mystery cults, fascinating glimpses into the historical background of the period, an in-depth consideration of the Jewish historian Flavius Josephus, are only some of the additional topics covered in the book. A richly-detailed, highly lucid and entertaining account of how Christianity began without an historical Jesus of Nazareth, who came to life only on the pages of the Gospels.

[Buy from Amazon.com](#)



## The Historical Evidence for Jesus

by G.A. Wells

In this thoroughly researched study, G.A. Wells has squarely faced the question of whether a man named Jesus lived, preached, healed, and died in Palestine during the early years of the first century of the Christian era - or indeed, at any time.

Building on the biblical studies of Christian theologians, Dr. Wells soberly demonstrates that we have no reliable eyewitnesses to the events depicted in the New Testament. He publicizes a fact known to theological scholars but little-known in the average Christian congregation: that the order of books of the New Testament is not an accurate chronological arrangement. Indeed, Paul, who never saw Jesus, wrote his epistles to early Christian congregations before the Gospels of Matthew, Mark, and John were written.

It may come as a great surprise to Christians and other monotheists, to agnostics, atheists, and humanists alike, that "the earliest references to the historical Jesus are so vague that it is not necessary to hold that he ever existed; the rise of Christianity can, from the undoubtedly historical antecedents, be explained quite well without him; and reasons can be given to show why, from about A.D. 80 or 90, Christians began to suppose that he had lived in Palestine about fifty years earlier."

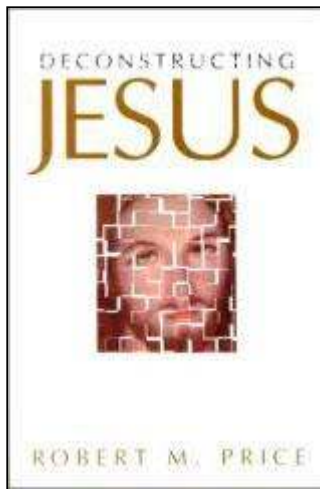
*The Historical Evidence for Jesus* is an easily understood but scholarly examination of the evidence for many long-accepted notions about the "biography" of the man called Jesus. This book takes up and quotes extensively from the Epistles and the Gospels of the New Testament, thus letting the evidence speak for itself in words familiar to every Bible reader. For example, Wells closely compares what Paul said about Jesus with what the author of Matthew, who lived later, wrote of him. Then he explains why these discrepancies apparently exist. Startling indeed is his proof that "earlier writers sometimes make statements which positively exclude the idea that Jesus worked miracles, delivered certain teachings, or suffered under Pilate."

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## Deconstructing Jesus

by Robert M. Price

After more than a century of New Testament scholarship, it has become clear that the Jesus of the gospels is a fictive amalgam, reflecting the hopes and beliefs of the early Christian

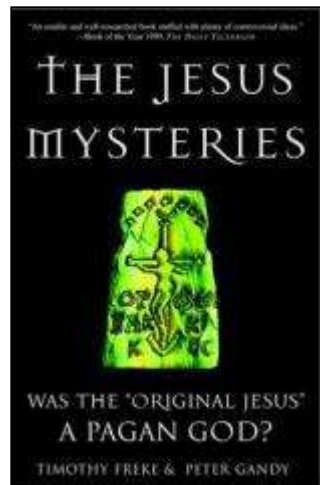


community and revealing very little about the historical Jesus. Over the millennia since the beginning of Christianity various congregations, from fundamentalist to liberal, have tended to produce a Jesus figurehead that functions as a symbolic cloak for their specific theological agendas.

Through extensive research and fresh textual insights Robert M. Price paves the way for a new reconstruction of Christian origins. Moving beyond the work of Burton L. Mack and John Dominic Crossan on Jesus movements and Christ cults, which shows how the various Jesus figures may have amalgamated into the patchwork savior of Christian faith, Price takes an innovative approach. He links the work of F.C. Baur, Walter Bauer, Helmut Koester, and James M. Robinson with that of early Christ-myth theorists - two camps of biblical analysis that have never communicated. The Jesus Christ of the gospels is very likely a fictional amalgam of several first-century prophets and messiahs, as well as of purely mythic Mystery Cult redeemers and Gnostic Aions.

Price argues that there is good reason to believe that Jesus never existed as a historical figure, and that responsible historians must remain agnostic about a "historical Jesus" and what he stood for. He also incorporates neglected parallels from Islam, the Baha'i Faith, and Buddhism. *Deconstructing Jesus* provides a valuable bridge between New Testament scholarship and early freethinkers in a refreshing cross-fertilization of perspectives.

[Buy from Amazon.com](#)



## **The Jesus Mysteries: Was the "Original Jesus" a Pagan God?**

by Timothy Freke and Peter Gandy

What if . . . .

- there were absolutely no evidence for the existence of a historical Jesus?
- for thousands of years Pagans had also followed a Son of God?
- this Pagan savior was also born of a virgin on the twenty-fifth of December before three shepherds, turned water into wine at a wedding, died and was resurrected, and offered his body and blood as a Holy Communion?
- these Pagan myths had been rewritten as the gospel of Jesus Christ?
- the earliest Gnostic Christians knew that the Jesus story was a myth?
- Christianity turned out to be a continuation of Paganism by another name?

Freke (a philosopher and author of books on spirituality) and Gandy (who is studying classical civilization) believe that first century Jewish mystics adapted the potent symbolism of the Osiris-Dionysus myths into a myth of their own, the hero of which was the Jewish dying and resurrecting godman Jesus. Therefore, the story of Jesus is a consciously crafted vehicle for encoded spiritual teachings created by Jewish Gnostics. We are unaware of this, they claim, because the Roman Catholic Church destroyed evidence of the connection between Christianity and the pagan mysteries. They make their case by offering an examination of mystery religions, especially Greek, pointing out the many parallels between them and what they see as the Gospels' message about Jesus. Freke and Gandy are familiar with a significant amount of recent biblical scholarship, though they rely mostly on Elaine Pagels' s work on the Gnostics. This book will obviously be controversial, but the authors are quite informed, as demonstrated by their extensive notes and bibliography. A list of related web sites, a Who's Who, and an index add to the book's usefulness. Recommended as an important book in the debate on the historical Jesus.

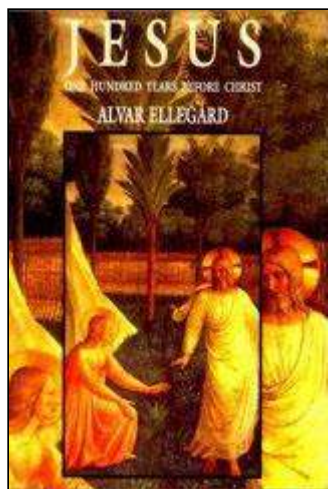
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## **Jesus: One Hundred Years Before Christ**

by Alvar Ellegard

It is commonly believed that the story of Jesus as told in the Gospels contains elements of fiction and myth, but in this ground-breaking and controversial book, Alvar Ellegard argues that even those ideas agreed to be the basic facts about the life of Jesus are fictional: Jesus was not born in the time of Augustus Caesar (27B.C. - 14A.D.). He was not baptized by



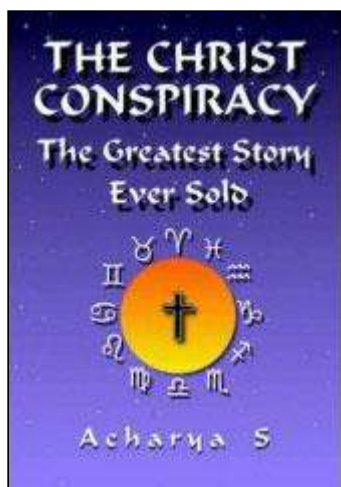


John. He was not sentenced to death by Pilate. And he never roamed Palestine as a wandering preacher and miracle worker. In fact, none of Jesus' supposed contemporaries ever saw him in the flesh but only through visions, as the Christ raised by God to heaven.

This closely researched and argued study takes the reader through the earliest Christian writings, including Paul's Letters and various other biblical and non-biblical texts, and presents the provocative argument that not one of these writers had ever met Jesus or refer to anyone who had. Indeed, Ellegard postulates, even the earliest Christians describe Jesus as a great Jewish prophet and teacher, who had already become a figure of mythology - not a contemporary crucified before their eyes, but a historical figure, on a par with the Old Testament prophets. Readers will surely be fascinated by this purely historical, non-theological approach to Christianity's origins.

"The reading is close, full of references in the main text as well as in endnotes...anyone interested in the argument will easily grasp and just as easily devour it." (*Booklist*)

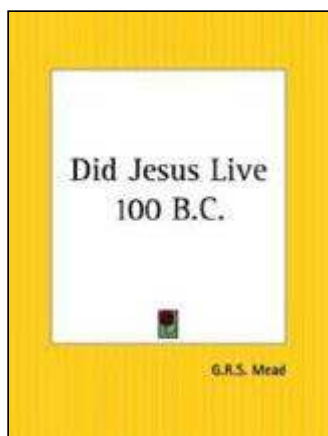
[Buy from Amazon.com](http://www.amazon.com)



## **The Christ Conspiracy: The Greatest Story Ever Sold** by Acharya S

Controversial and explosive, *The Christ Conspiracy* marshals an enormous amount of evidence that the religion of Christianity and Jesus Christ were created by members of various secret societies, mystery schools and religions in order to unify the Roman Empire under one state religion. This powerful book maintains that these groups drew upon a multitude of myths and rituals that already existed long before the Christian era and reworked them into the story the Christian religion presents today - known to most Westerners as the Bible. The author makes the case that there was no actual person named Jesus, but that several characters were rolled into one mythic being inspired by the deities Mithras, Heracles/Hercules, Dionysus and many others of the Roman Empire. She demonstrates that the story of Jesus, as portrayed in the Gospels, is nearly identical in detail to those of the earlier savior-gods Krishna and Horus, and concludes that Jesus was certainly neither original nor unique, nor was he the divine revelation. Rather, he represents the very ancient body of knowledge derived from celestial observation and natural forces. A book that will initiate heated debate and inner struggle, it is intelligently written and referenced. The only book of its kind, it is destined for controversy.

[Buy from Amazon.com](http://www.amazon.com)



## **Did Jesus Live 100 B.C.?: An Enquiry into the Talmud Jesus Stories, the Toldoth Jeschu, and Some Curious Statements of Epiphanius - Being a Contribution to the Study of Christian Origins.**

by G. R. S. Mead

"The author compares the Christian tradition with the Jewish, and finds in the latter a reminiscence of a Jesus who lived in the time of Alexander Jannaeus (104-76 B.C.). This person was transferred by the earliest evangelists to the later period, the attempt being facilitated by the fact that during the procuratorship of Pilate a false prophet had attracted some attention." - Albert Schweitzer

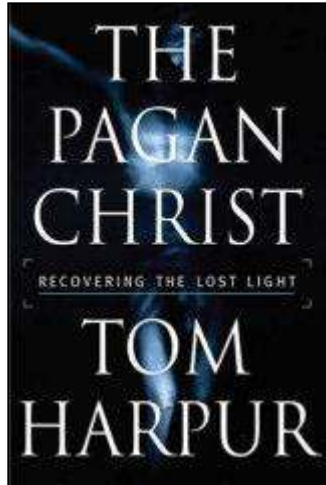
"Jannaeus' crucifixion of eight hundred Pharisees left a particularly strong impression on the Jewish world...In this connection it is of interest that the dating of Jesus as a heretic who was put to death for misleading people about 100 BC, under Jannaeus, is 'one of the most persistent elements of the Jewish tradition concerning Jesus' and 'goes back to the floating mass of tradition' from which the Talmud drew. Mead allows that this dating may have originated as a result of controversy between orthodox Jews and Christians of Pauline type whose Christianity comprised a 'minimum of history and a maximum of opposition to Jewish legalism'." - G.A. Wells

Contents: Canonical Date of Jesus; Earliest External Evidence to the Received Date; Genesis of the Talmud; Talmud in History; In the Talmud's Outer Court; Earliest External

Evidence to the Talmud Jesus Stories; Talmud 100 Years B.C. Story of Jesus; Talmud Mary Stories; Talmud Ben Stada Jesus Stories; Talmud Balaam Jesus Stories; Disciples and Followers of Jesus in the Talmud; Toldoth Jeschu; Jewish Life of Jesus; Traces of Early Toldoth Forms; 100 Years B.C. Date in the Toldoth; On the Tracks of the Earliest Christians; Concerning the "Book of Elxai;" 100 Years B.C. Date in Epiphanius.

See [Jesus in the Jewish Tradition: Extracts from Did Jesus Live 100 B.C.?](#)

[Buy from Amazon.com](#)



## **The Pagan Christ : Recovering the Lost Light**

by Tom Harpur

This book is a provocative argument for a mystical, rather than historical, understanding of Jesus, leading to a radical rebirth of Christianity in our time.

Harpur, a former Anglican priest and professor of Greek and New Testament at the University of Toronto, delves into the foundations of the Christian faith, questioning the historicity of the Bible, reinterpreting the familiar stories and restoring what he considers the inner meaning of scriptural texts. "Taken literally, they present a world of abnormal events totally unrelated to people's authentic living today." He documents the many traditions that predate Christianity and parallel the familiar Bible story. He sees Christianity, and the Bible itself, as a rehash of these traditions, merely imitative rather than a record of actual, historical events. He goes so far as to question the existence of the historical Jesus. Harpur believes that the early church establishment, through deliberate acts of suppression and the destruction of books that might challenge the orthodox view (most famously in the Alexandrian Library), shaped a rigid institution unable to cope with an evolving world. He insists that a major change must take place in order for Christianity to survive. His solution is termed "Cosmic Christianity"—a radical reinterpretation not just of the Bible but of the nature of the Christian faith and its links to the world's great spiritual traditions. Harpur's arguments are based in part on the works of Alvin Boyd Kuhn (1880-1963), Gerald Massey (1828-1907) and Godfrey Higgins (1771-1834).

Long before the advent of Jesus Christ, the Egyptians and other peoples believed in the coming of a messiah, a virgin birth, a madonna and her child, and the incarnation of the spirit in flesh. While the early Christian church accepted these ancient truths as the very basis of Christianity, it disavowed their origins. What had begun as a universal belief system built on myth and allegory was transformed, by the third and fourth centuries A.D., into a ritualistic institution based on a literal interpretation of myths and symbols. But, as Tom Harpur argues in *The Pagan Christ*, "to take the Gospels literally as history or biography is to utterly miss their inner spiritual meaning."

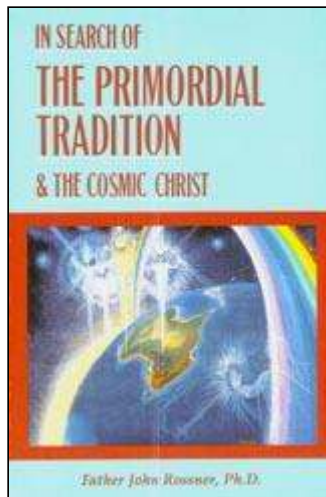
At a time of religious extremism, Tom Harpur reveals the virtue of a cosmic faith based on ancient truths that the modern church has renounced. His message is clear: Our blind faith in literalism is killing Christianity. Only with a return to an inclusive religion where Christ lives within each of us will we gain a true understanding of who we are and who we are intended to become.

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## **In Search of the Primordial Tradition and the Cosmic Christ: Uniting World Religious Experience With a Lost Esoteric Christianity**

by John Rossner

In this book the reader will be presented with the case for the existence - throughout the ancient world - of a widespread belief in (1) a Primordial Tradition of primal wisdom derived from the higher forms of human mystical and psychical experience, and (2) the cult of a universal "God-Man" or pre-existent "Cosmic Christ," based upon visionary and intuitive experiences which helped to stimulate the very birth of Christianity as a world-religion.



The Primordial Tradition is like the "Sanatana Dharma" of the Hindus, the "Living Torah" of the mystical Jews, the "Tao" of the Chinese, the "Path" of the Sufis, or the "Way, Truth and Life" of Jesus in the Christian gospels. It is found in every religion and can be owned exclusively by none. It has left its traces as "sparks among the stubble" in varied forms and in various degrees of luminosity in all human cultures. Its scattered fragments of primal insight and intuitive wisdom may be found by those who have eyes to see and ears to hear.

There is evidence that a now-lost esoteric Christianity, complete with belief in a pre-existent, archetypical "God-Man" or "Cosmic Christ," was once understood by its founder (Jesus) and earliest fashioner (Paul) as a particular synthesis of the larger Primordial Tradition, which had already long entered the mainstream of sectarian Jewish mystical consciousness. Jesus might thus be viewed as an heir of the mystery traditions of Egypt, Persia and Greece, and of the wisdom traditions of India, as well as an heir of the "Law and the Prophets" of Israel.

The Primordial Tradition is not merely an ancient system of belief and practice to be found in its entirety in any one or several historical cultures. It is, rather, a whole set of archetypical realities waiting to be discovered, at the highest reaches of the human consciousness, by all people. Similarly the lost esoteric Christianity, which often seems to elude ordinary modern practitioners of organized, "exoteric" forms of the Christian religion, is to be found - like Jesus' description of the Kingdom of God itself - deep within the psyche (soul) of the seeker.

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**For more on the Theosophical view of Jesus Christ, see the following articles by David Pratt:**  
[Who Was the Real Jesus?](#) & [The Origins of Christianity](#).

**[Blavatsky Bookstore](#)**

6/11/07



